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342 592 Mrs. Katel[7] was both unhappy and unpopular in her husband's community, and ran away for refuge to the Mandal who had brought her up. Her husband Katel followed her, and asked the Mandal's permission to settle in Lingthem; this was given and he was provided with land on which to build a house and which he could clear for cultivation. During the period when these four houses were built an equal number fell into decay either through family lines dying out, or through households amalgamating. Thus Tobgé, a young married man, all of whose family had died, had abandoned his house to go and live with Jiroong, who was his father's youngest brother.

According to the oldest inhabitants the number of houses increased very greatly in the second half of the nineteenth century. Ninety-year-old Serving, who was almost in his dotage, said that when he was a child there were only four houses in Lingthem; and Kahlyeu, born in 1860, says that in his childhood there were about twelve households. Kahlyeu ascribes the increase to the fact that in those days families were larger and split up as the sons grew older; but it seems probable that the indirect pacification after 1860 made possible a considerable increase in the number of permanently settled inhabitants.

173 [824] According to Kahlyeu—and the tradition is supported by others—until about the beginning of the seventeenth century the Lepchas were entirely nomadic, only building temporary mud huts, and travelling about the forests, living on such animals they could kill, and the wild plants, of which the Lepchas have considerable knowledge, for they know the edible (but not, as European tradition believes, the medicinal) properties of nearly every tree and plant. Iron for knives, Kahlyeu says, was introduced in the time of his father's grandfather, that is to say in the first half of the eighteenth

● [551] [7] Some objection may be taken to my referring to married women as Mrs. X. Among the Lepchas married women are never named, and there are three different methods of referring to them: mother of A, wife of B, or woman from C, that order representing the frequency of usage. Thus Mrs. Tafoor is usually called Chimpet-mu (mother of Chimpet, her eldest son), less often Tafoor-veu (wife of Tafoor), or Panung-mu (woman from Panung). 'Mother of A' seems to me unnecessarily confusing, and since, in nine cases out of ten, a married woman owes her presence in the community to the fact that she is married to her husband, I have found it most convenient consistently to refer to married women as 'wife of X', or, in the English form 'Mrs. X', since this term seems to me to approach nearest to the cultural reality.

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601 'mother', 'elder brother', 'elder sister', 'younger brother-or-sister,' 'child' and 'grandchild'. It does not matter how many brothers and their wives live together; all the brothers are called 'father', all their wives 'mother' by all the children; if it is necessary to distinguish which 'mother' or 'father' is meant, the child will say 'big mother', 'little mother', and if necessary 'middle mother'; his own mother he will call his 'real mother'. If the married brothers live in different houses the children of the younger brother will still call the elder brother and his wife 'father' and 'mother'; but the sons of the elder brother will call the younger brother 'uncle', and his wife 'potential spouse' (*aʒong*), for, as will be seen later, they may under certain circumstances inherit her.

The Lepchas count descent nine generations back on the father's side, and at least four on the mother's; a person with whom you share a common ancestor on the paternal side nine generations back is addressed in the same way as your real brothers and sisters, and their parents as though they were the brother and sister-in-law of your father. In theory a person should always be given the correct title reckoning back to this common ancestor, without regard to the relative age of the two people, but when the situation becomes too ridiculous the terms are modified. For example the co-wives of Lumba *chithembu* were 'grandmother' and 'grandchild' (the first wife was the grandchild of a younger brother, the second wife the great-great-grandchild of an elder sister) though there was only nine years difference in their ages; but the younger wife called the elder 'mother', because calling her 'grandmother' made her appear too old. Similarly Tafoor had a half-sister Pankek who was younger than his own children: he therefore told his children to call her by her name until she grew up, as the proper term for an aunt, *a-nyou*, is a very respectful one, and would be brought into ridicule if given to a little girl of six.

● 551 Except in the case of very young children people are almost always referred to by the proper kinship terms, or by their ecclesiastical or lay titles. Women are practically never named after marriage; they are referred to firstly as their husband's wife, and, as soon as they have borne a child, as their child's mother. Occasionally they are referred to as the inhabitants of the village they were born in. Only occasionally do childless widows start using personal names again. I know the names of very few women in Lingthem, and that is not because of bashfulness on my part or

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on the part of the people I talked to; men may remember the names of their wives, and do know those of their daughters, but practically never those of any other married women.

Personal names are of practically no importance to the Lepchas of Zongu and they have no sort of permanence. On the third day after birth, when the lama casts the infant's horoscope, he will discover his 'sacred name'; but this is never spoken by anyone, merely inscribed on the horoscope; it is never used subsequently; and nobody knows their own sacred name. On the third-day birth feast one of the people present (usually an 'aunt' or the officiating Mun) will give the child some name; it may refer to some physical peculiarity (e.g. *Thyak Thimbu*—Big Head), to some incident which took place while the mother was carrying the child, or may just be the day of the week on which it was born. In the case of a child born after several previous children had died young, he or she is often given a deprecating name such as Peut, which means a wandering Tibetan beggar-monk, or Tafong, which means a manger. But these names are equally impermanent. As the child grows older anybody may give him a nickname; thus Kurma *gyapön* as an infant was named by an aunt Tayout; his mother called him Kurma because as a suckling he was bad tempered (people say *kur kur* to a cross child). As children grow up their nicknames increase; and a person's name is simply that which is used most often. Many people have two or three names of equal validity, a state of affairs which at the beginning caused me enormous confusion. Thus Peut, Chano's 'brother', was also called Chinya, Nariya Kochet, Serving Aving and so forth. Except for outsiders names are of very little importance; the householder in whose name the property is registered must keep that name in use; otherwise names are almost non-functional.

It occasionally happens that as part of the cure of an illness the lamas will order their patient to change his or her name for a year; in such cases a new nickname is provided. If the banned name is meaningful the word is not avoided in ordinary conversation. The names of dead siblings are never given to new-born children, and those of the recently dead very seldom. It occasionally happens that the lama finds from his horoscope that the new-born child is the reincarnation of a dead ancestor; even in such cases, though the situation is considered mildly auspicious, the child is not given the name it bore in the earlier incarnation.

Names have a certain negative effect; a person should never

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mention the names of his parents or parents-in-law; a man should never mention the name of those women he calls daughter-in-law (that is the wives of his sons, of his younger brothers, and of his brother's sons), nor a woman the names of those men she calls 'son-in-law' (that is her daughter's husbands, her younger sisters' husbands, and the husbands of her sisters' daughters). These prohibitions hold good even after a person is dead; but here likewise there is no avoidance of the same or similar-sounding words in ordinary conversation. To call a person by name, rather than by their title or a kinship term is considered to be somewhat ill-mannered; it has the same effect as though one were treating him as a child or inferior. In Europe a parallel situation is created when a stranger is immediately addressed by his or her Christian name; it is classing that person as a child or a servant.

It is difficult to gauge the emotional weight which is carried by terms primarily employed in the immediate family when they are applied to more distant connections. My impression is that the use of such terms as 'mother' and 'father' does carry, and is intended to carry, some of the emotional attitudes derived from the original application of the terms. No child who was able to talk had any doubt as to who were his real father and mother, but many would say 'I have two mothers; my real mother is little mother.'

Among the Lepchas the crucial situation arises when a young man lives in the same house as the wife of his father's younger brother. If these two lived in different houses the woman would be a potential spouse for the boy; he would call her *azong* and would have the right to sleep with her. But if they live in the same house he will call her 'mother' and, on account of the emotions of respect and incest surrounding the term, is meant to respect her. In Lingthem there were five or six young men in this situation, and I was not, in any of the cases, able to decide to my own satisfaction whether they did or did not sleep with their 'little mothers'. In the presence of other people they would always deny doing so, for they would be ashamed to say otherwise; three or four confessed privately to having done so, but all on later occasions tried to withdraw or modify their statement, saying for example that though they had slept together they had not done anything. Third parties would never speculate on such private behaviour; to direct questions they would reply with the catch-phrase 'Who can read what is in the heart of another?' Such behaviour, though

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852 [554] 562 [824] the birth-god he will entreat it to send a boy next time. He will concentrate on this matter throughout the third night. He takes three tufts of elephant grass tied up with coloured thread, and attaches them to ordinary finger-rings. He then waves this bunch of grass slowly over the parents of the newly-born child, and afterwards over all present.

852 562 773 Now in Azoom Aru Purtam, a place through which all babies must pass before being born, there is a waterfall called *Lung Fing* and a well called *Rungzel Oonglop*. The waterfall is a boy and the well is a girl. When he concentrates on the matter the Mun is able to visit this place in spirit, when he persuades the god to make the waterfall and the well change places.

The coloured threads with which the elephant grass is tied are offered to the spirit of the waterfall, after which the grass is put in a pot of water and kept on the household altar. A chicken is now offered to Nazong Nyu, the progenitor of the human race, after which the two rings are given to the child's mother to wear. The performance of this ceremony, for which there does not appear to be any specific name, will assure that the next child born is a boy.

852 [787] 553 If a Lama is present on the third day he will work out the child's horoscope and give it a name; otherwise the child's father will go to his house. It may be noted, however, that the names given by Lamas are never used and in many cases are forgotten. Someone present will usually give the child a nickname, which will be selected in accordance with its appearance. Common names of this sort are "the fair one"; "the dark one," and so on; but the most extraordinary one I ever came across was *Kalok Tikung*, which being translated comes to mean "The rat's grandfather." Children are 551 generally called by these nicknames; but otherwise the custom of teknonymy is usual. An adult may occasionally be called by his name, but it is not considered polite to do so; and in no circumstances may a Lama's real name be mentioned. There does not appear to be any objection to

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mentioning the names of the dead; nor does a woman mind 551
giving the name of her husband; but she will, of course, say only the nickname.

While someone is selecting a nickname for the baby, one 852
of its aunts (it makes no difference which) ties red and white 553
threads round its wrists. All this time the baby will be lying in its mother's lap in the kitchen, and it is never taken near the Mun who is doing the ceremony. It must be kept awake, however, and as soon as the ceremony is over will sleep soundly. But before this its mother will feed it with a little butter, to which she may add the merest trace of powdered rice. On this occasion a necklace will usually be put round the baby's neck by its mother, but this is removed as soon as the ceremony is over and not put on again until such time as the child can crawl; otherwise it is thought that the baby will not take the breast properly.

With the exception of people actually living in the house 846
no one may see a newly-born baby until the morning of the third day after its birth. People do not make any remark on first beholding the child; nor are they expected to congratulate its parents. There is, however, no harm in remarking upon its likeness to either of its parents. The usual insincere platitudes such as are commonly uttered by us on these occasions are, however, not expected, and it is considered perfectly polite to behold the infant in stony silence. It seems to me an excellent custom.

A mother does not usually leave the house for the three days following the birth of her child, but after this she may, if strong enough, start going out again. She usually resumes her ordinary housework on the fourth day and the heavier field work on the seventh. For some weeks after the birth the mother is given extra food, which usually takes the form of chicken soup. This in itself sounds a very little thing; 846
but to anyone who has been accustomed to dealing with 562
the more primitive Hindu peoples of India (and perhaps also the Mohammedans, but I have no experience of them) it is a refreshing change to find a mother treated with

101 tion to the word 'Mother' is interesting, because customs are to be found amongst the
192 Lepchas which appear to be vestiges of the primitive-social institution of Matriarchy or the mother-ship of clans; whilst this institution still flourishes amongst their co-related tribes in the neighbouring Garo-hills, who trace their descent through their mothers and not
192 through their fathers. Thus, as apparent vestiges of matriarchy amongst the Lepchas, I
581 find still surviving the usage of female suitorship, in which the young woman proposes marriage by offering to the man selected a basket of eggs; personal inclination in the choice of a husband; monogamy as a rule only relaxed in case the wife proves barren,
● [531] tribal endogamy, avoidance of girl's mother, and not unfrequent Teknonymy whereby the father is called after his child — thus the father of Tak-li-ap (*Tak-li-ap bo*). Moreover all
103 the tribal groups (*a-gŭ*), of which there are several scores, bear the affix 'mother'
192 (*mo*) [1]), although the proper name in this group title is territorial, the name of a particular valley or glen or hillside; and their grouping is itself merely territorial and has no significance as to marriage or true tribal division. Instances of such groups are 'The Wormwood mother' (*Tak-hel-mo*), for the locality of this hamlet is exceptionally overgrown with wormwood; 'The Foot mother' (*Sang-dyang-mo*): this hamlet is one of the very few which lies at the *foot* of the tropical forge of the Tista-river; 'the Stockade mother' (*Tung-sung-mo*) this village near Darjiling occupies the site of an old stockade; 'the sloping-field mother' (*Ling-tam-mo*), 'the Namchi mother' (*Nam. tsii-mo*). and thus we also have 'the Darjiling mother' for those born at Darjiling (*Darjeling-mo*). The only group of the tribe,
101 it may be added, which does not bear this affix of 'mother' is the highest section or
192 *A-den-pan-tso* [2]) from which, as its name denotes, the kings (*Pano*) and the ministers (*A-den*) used to be drawn — now however its members have a preponderating strain of Tibetan blood.

As instances of others of these archaic words and phrases whose meanings have been
192 forgotten by the Lepchas, but which seem to me to be apparently of a descriptive character, may be cited the words and phrases qualifying 'fields' and 'world', namely '*Ku-ran-min*' and '*zor*'. In the former the words literally read 'bosom-stone-below', which would read 'the fields on the bosom of stone underneath.' The prefix *Ku* also is used for 'clothes', with the same meaning as Tibetan '*gö*', (goe) a coat, and *gur*, a tent, in either case would give the sense of 'the fields clothing the bosom of the stones'. Whilst the word joined to 'world' means 'rain' (*so* or *so*, which is literally applicated to the Lepcha part of the world as it is one of the rainiest sites on the globe; but probably it also meant originally the rain of the eyes or *tears*, and was perhaps thus used by the weary toiling Lepcha in the pessimistic sense of 'tearful world'.

[194] The homonymic character of the language also, would suggest the possibility that some of these archaic words are descriptive as in the tonic Chinese and Burmese, such as 'the *flat-thing* plate', 'the *round-thing* bottle' etc. It is to be hoped that this interesting question will be pursued by philologists.

776 The spirits and deities of the tribe are referred to in these songs, and require a little description, as they show the primitive conception of the Lepchas in regard to God, and the deification of natural objects and of their ancestors. The Lepcha gods and godlings are

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[1]) Not *Mung* as stated by Mr. Risley (loc. cit. IV. Appendix 88); this word means 'devil'.
[2]) The affix *tso* is interpreted as 'stock or lineage'.